

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-20 EB-11 AGR-20 TRSE-00 SS-20 NSC-10

SPC-03 L-03 H-03 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04

RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 OMB-01 EA-11 EUR-25 IO-14 IGA-02

COME-00 CIEP-02 DRC-01 /190 W
----- 055357

R 201035Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 349

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, EAID, CE

SUBJ: FOOD POLITICS CONTINUES

REF A. COLOMBO 2627 B. COLOMBO A-269 C. COLOMBO 3020

1. DURING PRESS CONFERENCE HELD BY OPPOSITION LEADERS DEC 18 TO ANNOUNCE NEXT SATYAGRAHA IN ANURADHAPURA ON JAN 8, OPPOSITION LEADER J.R. JAYEWARDENE SAID, ACCORDING TO NEWS-PAPERS, THAT HE WOULD PROVIDE EIGHT POUNDS OF FOOD PER WEEK PER PERSON IF HE BECOMES PM. IF HE COULD NOT DO THIS, HE SAID, HE WOULD RESIGN. UNDER QUESTIONING, HE APPARENTLY REFUSED TO SAY WHETHER HE WOULD RESTORE SECOND MEASURE OF RICE TO RATION. WHEN PRESSED TO INDICATE WHERE ADDITIONAL FOOD WOULD COME FROM, HE IS QUOTED AS SAYING: "I WILL GET THE BALANCE UNDER PL 480. I BELIVE I CAN GET IT."

2. STATEMENT INDICATES GROWING IMPORTANCE BEING GIVEN TO FOOD SUPPLIES AS POLITICAL WEAPON AGAINST GOVERNMENT. OPPOSITION ALSO INDICATED THAT ANURADHAPURA SATYAGRAHA WOULD BE AGAINST LACK OF FOOD SUPPLIES FOR PEOPLE OF SRI LANKA. EARLIER SATYAGRAHAS WERE CARRIED OUT OSTENSIBLY TO PROTEST TAKE-OVER OF LAKE HOUSE NEWSPAPERS. TWO MOST RECENT SATYAGRAHAS AT
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ATTANAGALLA ON 9 DEC AND NUWARA ELIYA NOV 11 GENERATED LITTLE

PUBLIC RESPONSE.

3. ACCORDING TO "CEYLON OBSERVER" 13 DEC, GSL HAS DECIDED TO PROVIDE RS 1 ADDITIONAL HALF-MEASURE (SEE REF C) TO ALL RATION BOOK HOLDERS (NOT JUST THOSE IN RICE-DEFICIT URBAN AREAS) BEGINNING JAN 1. SEVERAL STATEMENTS BY SENIOR GSL SPOKESMAN INDICATE ADDITIONAL HALF-MEASURE WILL CONTINUE BE DISTRIBUTED AT LEAST THROUGH SPRING 1974 MAHA HARVEST. OPPOSITION HAS CLAIMED CREDIT FOR RESTORATION ADDITIONAL RICE ON RATION AND SEEMS TO HAVE DECIDED TO REPLACE LAKE HOUSE TAKE-OVER WITH FOOD AS MOST VOLATILE POLITICAL ISSUE.
BYRNE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Concepts: FOOD SHORTAGE, FAMINE, RATIONING, FOOD ASSISTANCE
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Draft Date: 20 DEC 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Drafter: n/a
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Review Comment: n/a
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Review Markings:

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30 JUN 2005

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